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Toronto mayoral campaign can ill afford an ill Ford

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MISSION TO MARS

PART 2 OF OUR FEATURE ON A HUMAN EXPEDITION TO THE RED PLANET EXPLORES THE MINDS OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD WILLINGLY SAY GOODBYE TO EARTH PAGES 10 & 11

rhythm

THE "RISE UP SHOW"...
BEST MORNING SHOW IN WINNIPEG?

104.7FM

Jay Jaskiewicz and Diesel will be doing the Drop Zone this year in support of the Society of Manitobans with Disabilities. ELISHA DACEY/METRO

That's one way to get the drop on a canine cop

Easter Seals Drop Zone. Diesel the police dog to rappel with his handler down the RBC building for a good cause

ELISHA DACEY
elisha.dacey@metronews.ca

This is one time when you don't want to drop your weapon.

Diesel, one of Winnipeg's finest K9 service dogs, will rappel down the RBC building in the fall along with his handler, Officer Jay Jaskiewicz, as part of the Easter Seals Drop Zone in support of the Society of Manitobans With Disabilities (SMD).

Jaskiewicz said he's sure Diesel will do the drop in stride.

"We do help out the military with their survival training quite a bit, so he goes on helicopters. He should be OK with heights," said Jaskiewicz, adding Diesel has done rope work and rappelled down (much smaller) inclines before.

Jaskiewicz said he has no personal connection to the SMD, but said he's been thinking about doing the drop for a few years, especially after Diesel's sire, Judge, did the drop with his handler seven years ago. Judge retired from the Winnipeg Police Service K9 unit earlier this year.

Tammy Hildebrand, director of development for the SMD, said having Jay and Diesel do the drop presents a challenge, but no more than for any other participant.

"Our goal is to break down barriers.... We've had people go over in wheelchairs," said Hildebrand.

Diesel and Jaskiewicz will go down the building together, with the dog tethered to Jaskiewicz and dangling below him.

In order to participate, rappellers must raise at least $1,500 for the SMD. This year's goal is $125,000, said Hildebrand. To support Jay and Diesel or others doing the drop, visit thedropzone.ca.

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Cutting Edge Condominiums

IN OSBORNE VILLAGE

Canada's Greatest Neighbourhood

Debbie Hirsch, left, and Garry Hirsch, right, in the display suite's beautifully finished island kitchen

A new kind of condominium development - one that combines style, substance, incredible value and affordability as never seen before - is coming very soon to Osborne Village. The Village Junction is a four-storey condominium community with construction currently underway at 369 Stradbrook Avenue. There are only 36 smartly designed suites ranging from 770 sq. ft. to 980 sq. ft. (1 Bedroom & Den & 2 Bedroom suites) in a located that is voted Canada's Greatest Neighbourhood.

The Village Junction is going to be an exciting place to live for several reasons, says Cornerstone Real Estate agent Garry Hirsch.

"Its location (Location, Location, Location) alone is going to make it a very smart place to call home - with everything from restaurants, lounges, coffee shops, boutique shops, salons, night clubs, grocery stores, drug stores, clinics and so much more will literally be right at your doorstep," he said. "It's going to be a fun, incredibly convenient place to live."

Hirsch's partner at Cornerstone Real Estate, wife Debbie, added: "That's not all, there's more, a lot more. If you work downtown, it will be an easy walk to work. And if you're active, there's easy access to the River Walk or bike trails on Wellington Crescent that lead right to Assiniboine Park."

The development's construction quality is also going to make it a great spot to come home to every day, said Garry.

"The building has been designed to exceed the quality of many other condominium communities in every aspect of its design", he said. "The quality is going to be exceptional because the well-respected, established developers, Ventura Developments, have gone the extra mile to do things right."

Their commitment to quality will start from the ground up with pre-cast concrete piles, exterior walls with an R-30 insulation value, and a roof with an R-50 insulation value.

Meanwhile, the building will be a solid structure, built to construction standards that deliver an STC (Sound Transmission Class) rating of 60 - well in excess of the national building code of 50, and concrete block STC rating of 54.

"The building's solid, well-insulated structure will combine tri-pane, low-e argon windows and one-and-a-half inches of sound deadening Gypcrete (gypsum concrete) between floors with three additional layers of sound insulation to create a nice, quiet and energy-efficient suite" said Hirsch. "Hallways will also be pressurized to keep odors in suites, a feature that isn't normal for this price point, and there is even an elevator for residents' convenience."

Many of the construction features will add extra value for many years to come by keeping condominium fees low (currently estimated at $183 - $233). The building will have a complete fire sprinkler system throughout and all the in-suite laundry rooms will have floor drains, this dramatically reduces the cost of the buildings insurance which is a considerable portion of the condominium fee.

Additionally, the exterior will have minimal maintenance requirements due to its maintenance-free construction, no grass to cut and little or no snow removal to contend with - features that will minimize condominium fees. Not only that, but there's the added protection of having one of the city's most respected condominium property managers, Akman Property Management representing the owners.

"It's going to be a fun, incredibly convenient place to live."

Then, there are suites themselves: streamlined, stylish spaces that are exceedingly livable - and well-finished with loads of extras, and GST is included in the very attractive price. All suites will have individual forced air heating, central air conditioning (not baseboard heating or wall/window air conditioners) and individual 40 gallon hot water tanks, which are all rare in this price range; you'll be in total control of your living environment.

"The suites come in six models - a one-bedroom and den, model (Clarke) and five tow-bedroom, models (Bryce, Bole, Bell, Lewis and Pulford). They all feature open-concept interiors with high, lofty nine-foot (9-ft.) ceilings and oversized gourmet style island or peninsula kitchens with handy eating nooks, a spacious dining area and big living room," he said. "Huge oversized tri-pane windows will allow all kinds of natural light to shine in, and the open concept design will create exceptional flow, especially if you like to entertain."

Extra features provided at no extra cost include: loft-stye sliding bedroom doors, extra-large walk-in closets, soaker tubs with elegant Grohe plumbing fixtures (including rain shower heads) and oversized vanities, upgraded light fixtures including pendant lighting, and stainless steel fridge, stove, dishwasher, and over-the-range-microwave (with exterior exhaust) in the kitchen and washer and dryer in the laundry room.

"Those features represent incredible value," said Hirsch. "Suites at The Village Junction will also be outfitted with additional features that will heighten each suite's livability quotient, as well. If you want to head outside, there'll be huge balconies with cool, frosted, tempered glass surrounds for your privacy."

Another desirable feature is the covered parking with a ceiling height of 12 feet, oversized parking stalls (nearly 10 feet wide), a rare find in condominiums - but an especially useful feature if you have a bigger vehicle or just like the extra room.

Other amenities such as an elevator for ease of access to each floor, an abundance of CCTV security cameras in the parkade and entry, and a luxurious common area lounge with complementary Wi-Fi – will make The Village Junction the most modern, livable, exciting - and most value-packed - condominium development Osborne Village has ever seen, he added.

"If you're looking for a contemporary condominium development that combines the greatest location with style, substance and value - then act now because savvy buyers know what the competition is and are taking action, many are already sold and construction is currently underway"

He added that if you want to make a solid investment in one of the city's - and Canada's - great neighbourhoods, you'd best act quickly.

"It's important to note that most other condominium projects don't see our level of sales success until their construction has been completed. These condominiums provide buyers with incredible value, so if you're interested, contact us right away!" Suites start at $214,990 and only a 5 per cent deposit is required, with the balance due when you move in.

"It doesn't get any easier than that," said Hirsch. "And the best part is your deposit is fully insured, so there is no risk."

The Village Junction, www.villagejunction.ca, has a display center at 156 Scott St and Stradbrook, open Wednesdays from 5 to 8 or Saturday and Sunday 1 to 4.

For questions or a private viewing, don't hesitate, contact Debbie or Garry Hirsch @ 94CONDO (204-942-6636).

Frozen pipes. No hotels for homeowners

The city won't be putting those affected by frozen pipes up in hotels after a motion proposing those accommodations went nowhere at Wednesday's council meeting.

"I think this was one small gesture that we could've at least taken the time to cost out," said Coun. Paula Havixbeck, who spoke in support of the motion.

Havixbeck said a number of people told her they would've liked to be able to stay in a hotel while they were without water.

"It would've been part of a bigger plan that the city of Winnipeg needs to address this same kind of crisis that we likely could anticipate in the future," Havixbeck said.

Coun. Dan Vandal said he sent a similar motion back to the executive policy committee last month because he felt council needed more details.

"This is essentially the same motion here today that we had a month ago," he said.

"There's absolutely zero information in front of us on what this would cost, (or) what we've done to establish that there is no need."

Couns. Ross Eadie and Bryan Mayes cited the lack of research and said because the number of homes without water is gradually going down (now at 1,259, according to Eadie), they didn't see the need to put people up in hotels.

Mayes said no one has told him they wanted that kind of accommodation. Mayor Sam Katz agreed.

"It was exactly the opposite. They wanted to stay in their home, and they wanted to get their water hooked up," he said. SCOTT BEST/FOR METRO

Council should elect 3 to exec: Katz

Mayor Sam Katz believes allowing council to elect three members of the city's powerful executive policy committee would go a long way towards its shedding of the "mayor's cabinet" moniker.

Katz, with Coun. Thomas Steen as a seconder, put forward a notice of motion asking the provincial government for a change in the City of Winnipeg's Charter to allow city council to appoint three members to the committee.

Currently it is the mayor who has the authority to appoint all members of EPC, which is normally made up of the mayor and the different committee chairs.

"It's something that's been discussed," said Katz following Wednesday's city council meeting, arguing EPC does not have the same powers as a federal or provincial cabinet.

"This basically would have three members selected by the mayor and then three members by all of council, which I think is a really good balance and hopefully council will support that."

Katz said he's been thinking of this proposal for the past eight or nine months, and had conversations about it with Coun. Russ Wyatt (Transcona), who chairs the finance committee and is a member of EPC.

Wyatt said he's glad the mayor has started the discussion with his notice of motion, but believes amendments to it may be forthcoming.

"I think we have to decide whether we have a 'strong mayor' model or we don't," added Wyatt, referring to the model where more municipal power is concentrated in the mayor's office.

Asked by Metro if this is a campaign promise, Katz smiled and said, "You can't make a campaign promise until you declare you're running, so stay tuned," before reminding reporters that he'll announce his decision in June.

BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Should city cover transit for IGF events?

Subsidy. Mayor says request puts Winnipeg in tough spot

BERNICE PONTANILLA
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The city is between "a rock and a hard place" when it comes to a request by the Winnipeg Football Club to cover more of the bus transportation costs to Investors Group Field, said Mayor Sam Katz.

The Club is asking the municipal and provincial governments to further discount fees for their charter bus service, which means the two levels of government would bear more of the brunt.

Katz said he's already heard from citizens on all sides of the issue, especially from those who feel taxpayers should not be contributing more money towards the new stadium, which costs just over $200 million.

"I think it all stems from the fact that when the consultant did his report and told the world that they believe that one-third of the people attending football games would come by transit, I don't think the Winnipeg Football Club ever believed that, but it turned out to be the case," said Katz, adding he understands Winnipeggers' frustration.

"We all know the value of the Winnipeg Football Club, we all know they're facing a challenge.

"By the same token, there are people saying, 'What about some of the other projects that need money?'"

Katz said Winnipeg Transit projects the cost to be $750,000 for 2014 and $950,000 for 2015, with the Manitoba government covering 50 per cent through their transit cost-sharing agreement.

Buses line up outside Investors Group Field after a Winnipeg Blue Bombers game in 2013. ELISHA DACEY/METRO

Katz said he's still waiting for specific information from the city's administration and the Bombers before bringing it to council, including a written commitment from the provincial government to cover half of the cost.

He also said the club balked at raising ticket prices in order to pay for the higher transit costs.

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Water begins to flow through a cut culvert near Highway 45. PROVINCE OF MANITOBA/HANDOUT

Flash flood fears begin to subside

Ice blocking culvert thaws. 30-metre-high wall of water finally starts draining

Residents of a section of western Manitoba were expressing relief Wednesday after a large wall of water that threatened a flash flood began to subside, thanks to a culvert that was no longer blocked by ice.

The culvert, which leads to Birdtail Creek, started allowing water through early Wednesday morning, draining a 30-metre-high wall of water that had been building up and threatening to take out an entire embankment.

The water began heading to the Waywayseecappo First Nation, the town of Birtle and other small communities that had already evacuated more than 100 people in total from low-lying areas and put up sandbags and other defences.

"Expectations are that (the water) is at the low end of what we were preparing for, and so we think that the protection around our water treatment plant and the residences should be far more than adequate," Ron Bell, spokesman for the Town of Birtle, said from the community 250 kilometres west of Winnipeg.

"Certainly the best-case (scenario) was always that the cement culvert freed and that the water flowed through it. The worst case was if the entire embankment gave way and all the water flowed through at once."

A one-metre rise in the creek was expected in Birtle by late Wednesday afternoon, enough to flood some land but not enough to top sandbag dikes and other structures around buildings.

Waywayseecappo, the closest community to the culvert, was already seeing higher water Wednesday morning, but damage was expected to be minimal.

"What we do know is that there was probably some minor damage on the reserve to roads and potentially one or two homes," said Lee Spencer, acting executive director of Manitoba's emergency measures organization.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Council gives housing plan the green light

Council unanimously passed the city's housing policy implementation plan Wednesday, despite concerns expressed by a citizen.

The plan follows the approval of the city's housing policy last September that identified the lack of affordable housing being developed in Winnipeg as an important issue. It also said the city would work with other levels of government, housing developers, and community organizations to address the housing shortage.

Nancy Tester of the Right to Housing Coalition spoke in support of the implementation plan at Wednesday's council meeting.

"Too many citizens of Winnipeg are struggling to find decent, affordable housing. The situation is particularly acute for those who wish to rent," Tester told the meeting, adding that the current vacancy rate for a one-bedroom apartment is 1.4 per cent.

Jenny Gerbasi speaks at council on Wednesday. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

The implementation plan aims to ensure the city's vacancy rate is at a healthier three per cent and that new rental housing developments have a minimum number of affordable units.

Among other things, the plan discusses ways the city will work with the province and the feds, including developing an affordable housing strategy with the province and advocating for changes to federal legislation to make Winnipeg a more attractive place for rental developers.

Winnipeg lawyer and retired civil servant David Sanders expressed some concerns with the plan.

"There are only very few target figures in this document without any supporting analysis," Sanders told council. "There's no evidence here that the city administration has any idea how to implement effective housing programs on a significant scale."

Following Sanders' remarks, Coun. Ross Eadie said the city participated in a number of consultations led by the United Way's community task force to end homelessness.

"There was a significant effort made to do better in this case," added Coun. Jenny Gerbasi, who chairs the housing steering committee that created the plan.

"I think the housing community that were involved in this process really appreciated it, and they are supportive of it."

SCOTT BEST/FOR METRO

Former Manitoba NDP cabinet minister wants to run for federal Liberals

A former Manitoba NDP cabinet minister wants to run for the federal Liberals.

MaryAnn Mihychuk is seeking the Liberal nomination in the Kildonan-St. Paul riding in Winnipeg for the next federal election.

Mihychuk was a New Democrat member of the legislature for nine years and served for a time as minister for intergovernmental affairs and trade.

She stepped down in 2004 for an unsuccessful bid for Winnipeg mayor.

Mihychuk says she has decided to re-enter politics and believes the Liberals have the best policies on the economy and other issues.

The riding is currently held by Conservative Joy Smith, who captured 58 per cent of the vote in the last election. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dream vacation for aspiring archeologists

Churchill. You can take part in a real dig at Prince of Wales Fort National Historic Site

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

It's a vacation history buffs are going to really dig.

Parks Canada and the Churchill Northern Studies Centre are offering a vacation package that includes the chance to take part in a real archeological dig at Prince of Wales Fort National Historic Site near Churchill this summer.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Parks Canada archeologist Donalee Deck, who will be overseeing the two expeditions in August.

"It's about really discovering history for yourself in a very unique way at a very beautiful place."

Constructed on the shores of the Churchill River in the 1730s, Prince of Wales Fort was built to protect the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trade interests.

While it didn't do a great job of that (the fort was taken over by the French in 1782), it is now a treasure trove of historical artifacts, according to Deck, who said the area's environmental conditions have preserved much of what archeologists have been digging up at the site since 2002.

"We get a really great cross-section of information about what people were eating, the kinds of items they were bringing in, and what they were harvesting locally," she said, noting tens of thousands of artifacts have been unearthed.

Vacationers will have to shell out $2,200 for the week-long trip.

To register for one of the 32 spots available, call 204-675-2307 or email cnsc@churchill-science.ca.

No finder's keepers

Participants will excavate, screen and document their archeological finds, but they don't get to take them home. Artifacts will be brought to an archeology lab in Winnipeg for further study.

Parks Canada archeologist Donalee Deck shows off an English axe head unearthed at Prince of Wales Fort National Historic Site near Churchill. Parks Canada and the Churchill Northern Studies Centre are offering a vacation package that includes the chance to dig at the site this summer. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Driver roughed up in semi rollover

The 32-year-old male driver of this semi truck that rolled over at the corner of Brookside and Inkster boulevards around 8:45 a.m. Wednesday was taken to hospital, but not seriously hurt. The accident held up traffic in the area for nearly three hours as emergency crews righted the truck and cleaned up the mess.
SHANE GIBSON/METRO

St. Boniface

Replacement found for Cora's

The Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain (CCFM) announced Wednesday Stella's will take over the space where Chez Cora's currently operates when its lease runs out Aug. 31.

The well-known local restaurant chain will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as a full-service bar with "distinctive franco-phone character," according to a joint press release from the CCFM. METRO

Called on it. Police blitz nails drivers using phones while driving

Manitoba police handed out nearly 1,500 tickets in April to drivers caught using their phones behind the wheel during a month-long enforcement blitz funded by Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI).

The campaign was conducted by six police agencies including the Winnipeg Police Service.

"Distracted driving is extremely dangerous driver behaviour," said MPI's MaryAnn Kempe in a release. "The numbers clearly show that some drivers continue to break the law and place innocent motorists at risk."

A similar campaign last November saw 1,800 drivers dinged for using a hand-held device while driving.

Drivers caught using their phones on the road get a $200 fine and two demerits. METRO

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Scan the photo below with your Metro News app to hear Jack Lawson of the Federal Fisheries Department break down the whale's risk of exploding.

Drug-resistant bacteria pose worldwide threat

Antibiotics. Experts warn that the world could be heading toward a future where minor infections can kill

Bacteria resistant to antibiotics have now spread to every part of the world and might lead to a future where minor infections could kill, according to a report published Wednesday by the World Health Organization.

In its first global survey of the resistance problem, WHO said it found very high rates of drug-resistant E. coli bacteria, which causes problems including meningitis and infections of the skin, blood and the kidneys.

The agency noted there are many countries where treatment for the bug is useless in more than half of patients.

WHO's report also found worrying rates of resistance in other bacteria, including common causes of pneumonia and gonorrhea. Unless there is urgent action, "the world is headed for a post-antibiotic era in which common infections and minor injuries which have been treatable for decades can once again kill," Dr. Keiji Fukuda, one of the agency's assistant director-generals, warned.

WHO said it couldn't assess the validity of the data provided and that many countries had no information on antibiotic resistance.

WHO said people should use antibiotics only when prescribed by a doctor, that they should complete the full prescription and never share antibiotics with others, or use leftover antibiotics.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Removing carcasses is a whale of a task

Provincial and federal officials are discussing the best way to remove the rotting carcasses of two blue whales near Trout River and Rocky Harbour in Newfoundland's west coast. Federal Fisheries Minister Gail Shea said Wednesday that Ottawa is working with a Canadian museum on an agreement to take ownership of the whales so they can contribute to educating the museum's visitors. DON BRADSHAW/THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO - NTV NEWS

Over 100 sickened after food safety conference

Health officials are investigating what may have sickened more than 100 people at a conference where more than 1,300 food safety experts had gathered for the Food Safety Summit held early April in Baltimore.

Alvina K. Chu, who is leading the Maryland Department of Health's investigation, said Tuesday that officials haven't determined what caused the illness. It's not clear if the illness was transmitted by food or from person to person, she said.

Health officials said there have been no reported hospitalizations or deaths.

Rita Foumia, with BNP Media, which hosts the summit, said nothing like this has happened in the summit's 16-year history. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cleanup underway after Arkansas tornado

A volunteer helps burn debris from a destroyed house in Vilonia, Ark., Wednesday. Arkansas had 15 deaths after a tornado blasted through Sunday. Along stretches of damaged houses in the Vilonia area, volunteers cleared trees from across homes, driveways and streets.

DANNY JOHNSTON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Execution was not humane, White House says

Oklahoma. Inmate writhed, clenched his teeth and appeared to struggle as a new drug combination failed

Officials were conducting an autopsy Wednesday on an American death row inmate who appeared to struggle before prison officials halted the execution in which Oklahoma state was using a new drug combination for the first time.

The man later died of a heart attack, and the botched execution was expected to intensify the debate over how states handle lethal injections.

Fannie Bates holds a sign urging a stay in two upcoming executions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The White House said the failed execution fell short of the humane standards required when the death penalty is carried out. Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin called for an independent review of the state's execution protocols.

The autopsy on Clayton Lockett, 38, will include an examination of the injection sites on his arms and a toxicology report to determine what drugs were in his system, medical examiner's spokeswoman Amy Elliott said. The autopsy in Tulsa, Okla., was expected to last for several hours, Elliott said, and it could take two to four months to complete the toxicology report.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ferry owners ignored warning

An off-duty captain of the sunken South Korean ferry has told investigators that the owners ignored his warning that the ship shouldn't carry too much cargo because it wasn't very stable, a prosecutor said Wednesday.

The captain, whom prosecutors will only identify by his surname, Shin, was on vacation on the day of the accident two weeks ago that has left more than 300, mostly high school students, dead or missing and has caused widespread shame and grief.

The ferry was piloted April 16 by a substitute captain, Lee Joon-seok, who is now being detained along with 14 other crew members who were involved in navigating the Sewol.

Yang Jung-jin, a senior prosecutor on the team investigating the sinking off the southern coast, wouldn't say when the captain warned the company and didn't know whether Shin made multiple warnings about stability. Divers have recovered 212 bodies from the wreckage.

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Nanaimo, B.C. Former employee arrested in sawmill shooting spree

Two employees at a Vancouver Island sawmill were killed, two others were injured and one of their former co-workers was arrested Wednesday after a gunman opened fire in the mill's parking lot and continued shooting inside, RCMP said.

The shooting happened shortly before 7 a.m. at a Western Forest Products sawmill in Nanaimo, more than 100 kilometres north of Victoria.

Police arrived within minutes of the first 911 call, RCMP said, and arrested a 47-year-old man from Nanaimo.

Four men were taken to hospital with gunshot wounds, one by air to Victoria and the rest to Nanaimo, where two were pronounced dead.

Few details were released about the victims, the suspect or what may have motivated a workplace shooting that left a normally quiet coastal city of about 84,000 people in shock.

Supt. Mark Fisher said police believed the attack began in the parking lot and then moved into the mill's offices.

An RCMP officer walks away from the scene of a shooting at a sawmill in Nanaimo, B.C., Wednesday. CHAD HIPOLITO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fisher didn't provide any further details about the suspect and declined to speculate about the attack's motivation.

Western Forest Products said the suspect was a former employee, though it wasn't clear when the man left the mill or under what circumstances. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ford to take a break to deal with his 'substance abuse'

Campaign put on hold. Lawyer for infamous mayor of Toronto says embattled leader knows he 'needs help'

Rob Ford will take a leave of absence from his re-election campaign to seek help for substance abuse, his lawyer said Wednesday as new media reports involving drugs and alcohol emerged.

Dennis Morris said the Toronto mayor "realizes he needs help for substance abuse," but would not specify which substance his client is seeking treatment for or what steps he will take.

"In my eyes, he should announce those steps to the public in the near future," Morris said.

The Toronto Sun, which carried quotes from the mayor about his decision to go get help, reported Ford will nonetheless remain on the ballot for the Oct. 27 mayoral election.

Rob Ford's lawyer says the Toronto mayor will take a leave of absence to seek help for substance abuse. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The announcement came as both the Sun and the Globe and Mail published fresh allegations about the mayor.

The Globe said two of its reporters viewed a new video of Ford smoking what the newspaper said was described as crack cocaine by a self-professed drug dealer. The Globe said the video was secretly filmed in Ford's sister's basement early Saturday morning.

Meanwhile, the Sun reported it obtained an audio recording of the mayor "being unruly as he's ordering booze" and making "lewd comments" about one of his election rivals at a west Toronto bar.

Ford has denied allegations that he is addicted to drugs or alcohol, though he has admitted having used crack cocaine while in a "drunken stupor" during his tenure.

Shortly afterward, city council voted to relieve Ford of many of his mayoral powers.

The mayor also admitted he had been drinking during an incident in which he was filmed using Jamaican swear words and other profanities at a Toronto restaurant.

He vowed last year that he had given up alcohol — part of a campaign to rehabilitate his image in light of his admission. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sinn Fein leader arrested in 1972 IRA murder case

Police in Northern Ireland arrested Sinn Fein party leader Gerry Adams on Wednesday on suspicion of involvement in the Irish Republican Army's 1972 abduction, killing and secret burial of a Belfast widow.

Adams, 65, confirmed his own arrest in a prepared statement and described it as a voluntary, prearranged interview.

Police long had been expected to question Adams about the 1972 killing of Jean McConville, a 38-year-old mother of 10 whom the IRA executed as an alleged spy.

According to all authoritative histories of the Sinn Fein-IRA movement, Adams served as an IRA commander for decades, but he has always denied holding any position in the outlawed group.

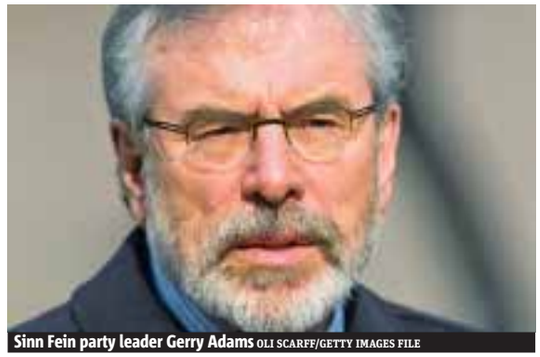
"I believe that the killing of Jean McConville and the secret burial of her body was wrong and a grievous injustice to her and her family," Adams said. "Well publicized, malicious allegations have been made against me. I reject these. While I have never disassociated myself from the IRA and I never will, I am innocent of any part in the abduction, killing or burial of Mrs. McConville."

Reflecting the embarrassment associated with killing a single mother, the IRA did not admit the killing until 1999, and her unmarked grave was discovered only by accident near a Republic of Ireland beach in 2003.

Adams was implicated in the killing by two IRA veterans who gave taped interviews to researchers for a Boston College history archive on the four-decade Northern Ireland conflict. Belfast police took legal steps to acquire the interviews, parts of which already were published after the 2008 death of one IRA interviewee, Brendan Hughes. The researchers fought unsuccessfully to avoid handover of the tapes of the second IRA interviewee, Dolours Price, who died last year.

In his interview, Hughes, a reputed longtime deputy to Adams within the Belfast IRA, said McConville was killed on Adams' orders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Sinn Fein party leader Gerry Adams OLI SCARFF/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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Nigerian schoolgirls forced to marry their abductors?

Nigeria. About 50 girls managed to escape, 220 remain missing

Scores of girls and young women kidnapped from a school in Nigeria are being forced to marry their Islamic extremist abductors, a civic organization said Wednesday.

At the same time, the Boko Haram terrorist network is negotiating over the students' fate and is demanding an unspecified ransom for their release, a Borno state community leader said.

The news of negotiations comes as parents say the girls are being sold into marriage to Boko Haram militants. The students are being paid 2,000 naira (about $12) to marry the fighters, Halite Aliyu of the Borno-Yobe People's Forum said. She said the parents' information about mass weddings is coming from villagers in the Sambisa Forest, on Nigeria's border with Cameroon, where Boko Haram is known to have hideouts.

"The latest reports are that they have been taken across the borders, some to Cameroon and Chad," Aliyu said.

Outrage over the failure to rescue the girls is growing and hundreds of women braved heavy rain to march Wednesday to Nigeria's National Assembly to protest lack of action over the students. Hundreds more also marched in Kano, Nigeria's second-largest city.

"The leaders of both houses said they will do all in their power but we are saying two weeks already have passed, we want action now," said activist Mercy Asu Abang.

Nigerians have harnessed social media to protest, trending under the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mothers with daughters among the more than 200 schoolgirls kidnapped two weeks ago by Islamic extremists in Nigeria protest in the capital over the government's failure to rescue the girls. GBEMIGA OLAMIKAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrian crisis

Airstrike hits school in Aleppo, killing at least 19

A Syrian fighter jet struck a school with a missile in the opposition-held part of the northern city of Aleppo Wednesday as teachers and students were preparing an exhibit of children's drawings depicting their country at war, killing at least 19 people, including 10 children, activists said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

10 killed in Russia

Fire at military warehouse

Russia's Defence Ministry says 10 people have died after a fire broke out at a military warehouse in the Siberian Baikal region.

The defence ministry said 10 people who were travelling in a truck near the depot when the fire broke out late on Tuesday were found dead.

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Goodbye, Earth ...

Pioneers. A one-way ticket to Mars means the hopefuls will have to bid goodbye to their planet and loved ones

JEREMY NOLAIS
Metro in Calgary

In all likelihood, the first tickets to the Red Planet won't come with the guarantee of a return trip.

For those on the maiden Mars voyage, it could mean goodbye forever to loved ones and the comforts of home.

"Wait, wait — there's not a Starbucks on Mars?" questioned prospective astronaut Tyler Reyno, his tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Laughs aside, Reyno, who hails from Lower Sackville, N.S., admits his quest to propel the human race towards an interplanetary lifestyle would come with some major sacrifices.

But the 21-year-old remains determined to land a spot among the final 1,000 candidates to be a part of the Mars One mission, which is being steered by a deep-pocketed entrepreneur and has a goal of settling on the planet's surface in the year 2023.

Reyno is also in the early stages of launching a Canadian rocket company — Open Space — and has attracted hundreds of followers on social media to his Send Nova Scotia to Space campaign.

"It's a life of purpose in place of a life of comfort," he said. "I find it strangely alluring where every second is a second of survival and challenge and testing. Space exploration is probably just the greatest thing I could ever accomplish."

Calgary engineer Zac Trolley also counts himself among those on the Mars One shortlist and already appears to be on a mission of sorts, one that may prove just as important as one day strapping himself into a skyscraper-sized rocket bound for a new world.

Since learning of his Mars finalist status, he's embarked on a speaking tour, discussing the potential of inter-planetary settlement with working peers, more than 20 elementary-school classes and "whoever else will listen."

Trolley anticipates society being on the verge of a new-age space race, where entrepreneurs with deep pockets will let their imaginations — and their money — run wild.

But he fears there's a lack of Christopher Columbus-eque spirit among many he meets. Save for a few adventurous cavers and deep-sea divers, Trolley said most people are content with going about their day-to-day lives with little care for what may lurk in the dark abyss of the solar system.

"I've had people say 'How dare you? You shouldn't do that,'" he said. "(It's) fear. People are scared of what they don't understand.

"We always have to push boundaries," he continued. "We would have never left the caves and our small villages if people didn't wonder what was over the next hills. And I'm sure, back then, there were people saying, 'No, don't go over those hills — there be dragons.'"

Trolley's parents are worldly explorers themselves. As such, father Gary Trolley said he understands his son's desire to literally go where no man has gone before.

"It will be, in many ways, a sad day to say goodbye," he said.

"He keeps telling us he will be able to communicate with us, but it's not the same thing.

"We try to instil in our children: find a dream, find a passion and go for it — Zachary's chosen a big one," Gary added.

Zac said some have asked if he'll plan his own funeral before embarking to Mars.

"It's such rubbish," he said. "If I was cut off, my friends and family would know that I was doing what I loved doing — doing what I was meant to do. Could you wish anything better on someone than that?"

A world to gain
"People say, 'Why would you leave everything on Earth behind?' I tell them, 'Because I'm getting an entire planet.'"
Zac Trolley, Calgary engineer and potential Mars voyager
MARS
CHRIS HADFIELD

Calgary engineer Zac Trolley admits he has many comforts readily available both inside and near his bachelor pad, but said he's always dreamed of doing something more with his life. He's among those hoping to secure a ride to Mars or an asteroid as a new-age space race appears primed to ignite. JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO IN CALGARY

... Hello,

A human expedition to Mars is proposed within the next 15 years. Metro takes you on an exploratory trip to find out just why life on the Red Planet is so alluring, and what awaits us in the future.

Calgary artist Bryan Versteeg started working on the Martian space habitat after he was approached by the founders of the

Keeping astronauts

Just because there's zero gravity doesn't mean you can skip the gym.

In fact, the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) recommends its orbiting astronauts work out for two hours each and every day they spend aboard the International Space Station. Squats, treadmill runs, the daunting bench press, you name it — exercising is seen as pivotal to helping combat the loss of muscle mass and bone density that plagues astronauts who no longer require anything to support their weight.

Then comes food, and Natalie Hirsch, project officer in the CSA's life sciences and space medicine division, is quick to point to a potential struggle with keeping astronauts fed for the duration of their jaunt to Mars and the subsequent time it takes up to, say, start farming, once there.

Estimates have suggested the journey to the Red Planet will take seven months alone and the "thermo-stabilized" foods stored aboard ISS only keep for about a year.

Fresh fruits and vegetables go bad after a week — making it a real treat for astronauts every time a new shuttle packed with a cart full of apples docks at ISS.

Then there's the potential for picky eaters.

Hirsch said there are anecdotal reports of astronauts' dietary preferences changing once they leave the planet, although no formal study has been done to determine why.

"We do have people saying 'I love spinach' on the ground and when they get into space the same spinach they tested pre-flight is just not as tasty," she said.

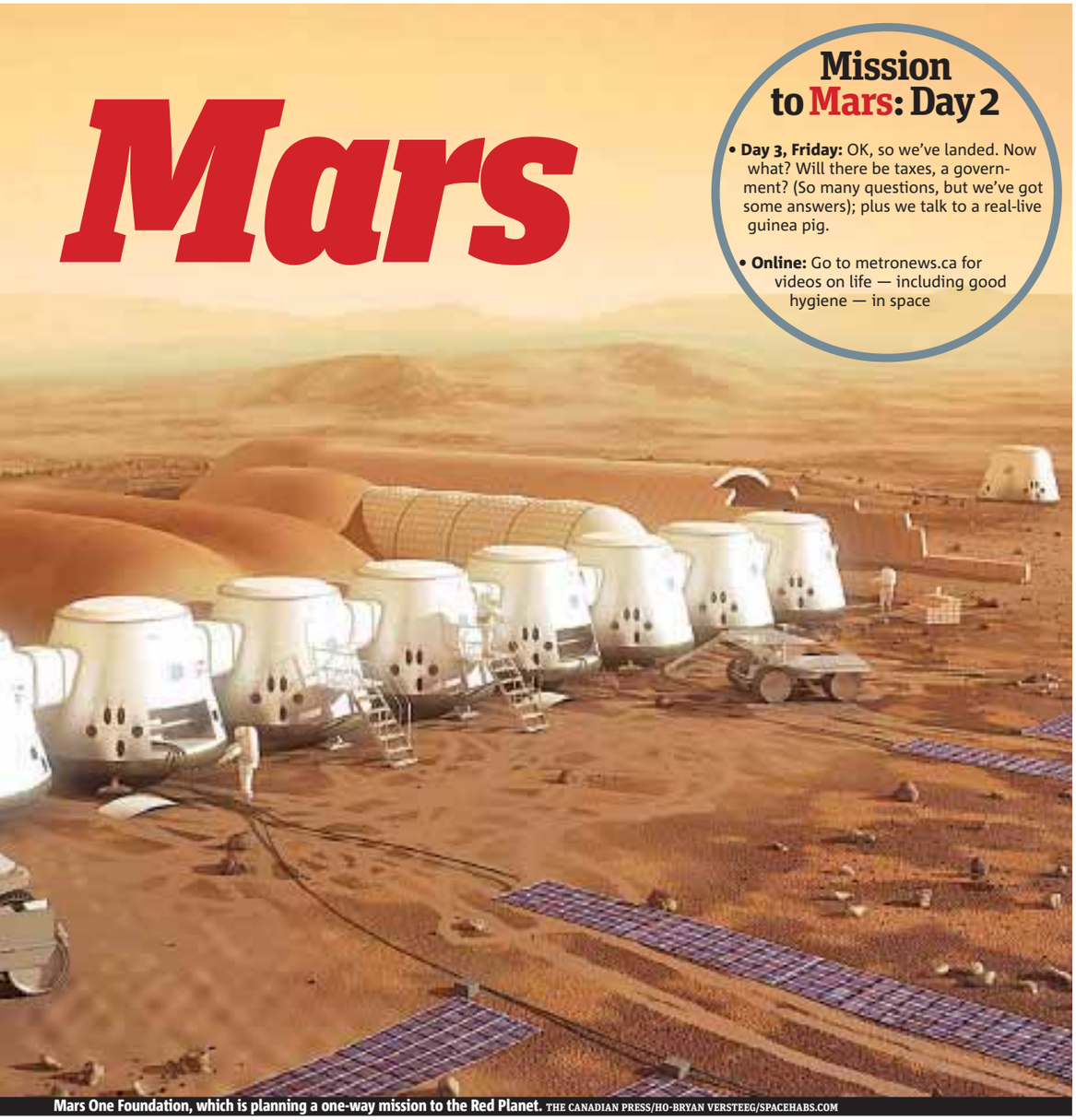
JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO IN CALGARY

See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app. Astronaut Chris Hadfield explains the space toilet

Mars

Mission to Mars: Day 2

- **Day 3, Friday:** OK, so we've landed. Now what? Will there be taxes, a government? (So many questions, but we've got some answers); plus we talk to a real-live guinea pig.
- **Online:** Go to metronews.ca for videos on life — including good hygiene — in space



Mars One Foundation, which is planning a one-way mission to the Red Planet. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO-BRYAN VERSTEEG/SPACEHABS.COM

fed and fit is no picnic

How not to let yourself go ... in space

To get a sense of what exercise gear could go with astronauts on their mission to Mars, here's the equipment used aboard the International Space Station:

- **The cycle ergometer:** Works similarly to a stationary bike and comes complete with a back-support plank and hand holds to keep the astronaut on the machine.
- **The treadmill:** Unlike your run-of-the-mill basement device, the ISS treadmill features a bungee and harness contraption to tie the astronaut down. The bungees are then set to put a load on the astronaut that is progressively increased throughout the mission, making their space run more difficult.
- **The ARED:** This device mimics weightlifting on Earth by utilizing vacuum cylinders that can be adjusted to create up to 600 pounds acting against astronauts performing squats, dead lifts, and so on.

Jeff Fortuna is testing a treadmill developed at NASA to simulate weightless exercise that can be used to keep astronauts in shape. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

A day in the life of a space settler

A general view of a "Space Toilet" is seen in a "Space Habitation Module" at Miraïkan, The Emerging Museum of Science and Innovation, in Tokyo, Japan. GETTY IMAGES

And you thought you had bathroom issues

The toilet aboard the International Space Station relies on airflow instead of gravity to contain excrement. Urine is mixed with other wastewater, purified, and then returned to the drinking water supply. Solid material, meanwhile, is gathered, exposed to the harsh climate of space to destroy bacteria — and the associated smell — and then eventually jettisoned into space when a large enough amount has been gathered.

Astronauts don't cry ... no, really

There's no crying in space. Because of the zero gravity atmosphere, space explorers' tears don't fall; they just form water bubbles and stay there until removed.

Wow, you really need a (sponge) bath!

Sponge baths, not showers, are generally the best method to exercise personal hygiene aboard a space shuttle or station.

Hey, old chap. Got the time?

Canadian astronauts in space and those manning the mission back on Earth generally follow Greenwich mean time, meaning they keep the same hours as your average chap living in London, England.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO IN CALGARY

The end of a dream ... for now

Daniella Longchamps demonstrates outside the National Restaurant Association's 28th Public Affairs Conference on Tuesday in Washington, D.C. Senate Republicans blocked an election-year Democratic bill on Wednesday that would boost the U.S. federal minimum wage, handing a defeat to President Barack Obama on a vote that is sure to reverberate in this year's congressional elections. ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

The rich get richer, the poor get poorer

Inequality. While the top 1% in Canada and the U.S. line their pockets, the 99% make do with less

Canada is among the worst in the developed world in terms of the widening income gap, according to a new OECD paper.

The analysis shows income inequality has grown in most advanced economies represented in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development over the past three decades, but the United States and Canada are near the top in terms of growth and in absolute terms.

The OECD says the top one per cent of Canadian pre-tax income earners captured 37 per cent of the overall income growth between 1981 and 2012, and now account for 12.2 per cent of the country's total annual income.

In the United States, the top one-percenters captured 47 per cent of the total income growth in the country during the period — and now share one-fifth of the country's pre-tax income.

Meanwhile, incomes among the poorest households have not kept pace with overall income growth, the OECD says, and in fact stripping away the top one-percenters would leave overall income growth considerably lower in many countries.

This is why the majority of the population can't reconcile their countries' economic growth rate with improvements in their incomes, the OECD report speculates.

The OECD data shows income disparities, while growing in most of the 34 economies it tracks, varies greatly from country to country, with little correlation as to the economic performance during the period.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

O, Canada

37%

The OECD says the top one per cent of Canadian pre-tax income earners captured 37 per cent of the overall income growth between 1981 and 2012, and now account for 12.2 per cent of the country's total annual income.

New survey. 39% of Americans changed password after Heartbleed

Most Americans who recently learned about a major breakdown in Internet security nicknamed Heartbleed have been trying to protect themselves, according to a new survey by the Pew Research Center.

Passwords were changed or online accounts were closed by 39 per cent of the Internet users in Pew's telephone survey of 1,501 adults taken in the U.S. from April 23-27.

But 36 per cent of the Internet users participating in the survey hadn't heard about Heartbleed at all.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A breakout star? StubHub goes from broker to producer of concerts

You can soon buy concert tickets from StubHub for shows produced by StubHub.

The company, which helps brokers and fans buy and sell tickets on its website, announced Wednesday it will sell tickets to concerts that it will produce. It has five shows planned so far featuring "emerging acts" and will launch its first self-produced concert May 18 in Los Angeles.

The performer will be announced next week.

StubHub is getting involved in a business dominated by Live Nation Entertainment Inc. and its Ticketmaster subsidiary.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Online purchases

Aeroplan partners with Shop.ca

Love shopping? Love travel? Perhaps you love shopping while you travel?

Aeroplan announced Tuesday a new partnership with Shop.ca, making it easier for shoppers to earn Aeroplan Miles on their online purchases.

Users will also be entitled to free shipping and returns in 28 product categories including electronics, sporting equipment, home furnishings and more.

METRO

Flapping around

Twitter's stock dives down

Shares of Twitter dropped in morning trading Wednesday to their lowest point since the company went public in November. Investor concern remains over the short-messaging service's ability to keep adding users and keep existing users engaged.

Twitter has said it is focusing on expanding its audience and encouraging people who do use its service to use it more often. But Twitter has not been expanding its user base as quickly as its investors would like. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 91.24¢ (-0.08¢)

Natural gas: $4.80 US (-$0.04)
Dow Jones: 16,580.84 (+45.47)

TSX 14,651.87 (+68.76)

OIL $99.74 US (-$1.54)

GOLD $1,295.90 US (-$0.40)

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THE DIFFERENCES ARE STILL CUTE

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

My relationship with my girlfriend still has that new-courtship smell, so we find our differences fun and enjoyable.

For instance, she recently said, "Do you want to see the new shoes I bought?" and I said, "Yes."

I know.

Society rightfully finds these attempts to take an interest in each other disgusting, but we don't care because we're surrounded by The Forcefield of Love, which filters out negative thoughts and nauseated glances.

That said, I didn't realize the huge gulf between us until she sent herself packing.

No, she didn't leave me. She moved to a new apartment.

And, let me tell you, she moves like Jagger, assuming Mick has an ace moving company and excellent organizational skills.

My girlfriend was moved into her apartment with Internet hooked up, everything unpacked, and a new bed made in both senses, all by mid-afternoon. Compare that to me, who took two months to get Internet, four years to unpack (there's been little call for kitchen utensils, less for oven cleaner) and a bed that isn't made in either sense thanks to unconstructed Ikea drawers. Our approaches to apartment moving and living are very different, but in the spirit of these effortless early days, I can see the value in both. Observe:

Planning, her way: She moves from room to room, planning which items will go in which boxes. **Advantage:** She is in full control of the move. **Planning, my way:** I move from room to room, planning which items will go into which boxes until the night before when I look up from the couch and say, "Oh right, the kitchen!" **Advantage:** I work better with a deadline.

Packing, her way: She followed the Bush Doctrine and had her old apartment pre-emptively packed before her belongings expected anything. We walked among the stacks of boxes for a couple of weeks like we were in the last shot of Raiders of the Lost Ark. **Advantage:** Unpacking was easy thanks to her fastidiousness. She knew which box Schrödinger's cat was in, and whether it was alive or dead. **Packing, my way:** I skipped over the boxes during my last move by choosing an apartment in the same neighbourhood and throwing my stuff at random into a wheelbarrow. **Advantage:** This was quick, easy and allowed me to say that I have used a wheelbarrow.

Insects, her way: Her tolerance for bugs is low, but if they were in her apartment, she would remove them by neatly stacking them in a clearly labelled box reading, "Hexapoda." **Advantage:** Cleanliness is good in an apartment, I've heard. **Insects, my way:** When I came back from a European vacation and discovered that a creepy crawler had joined me in bed and chewed on me throughout the night, I decided I would simply not go into the bedroom for several months in hopes of starving it out. **Advantage:** It worked.

So there are upsides to both my girlfriend's approach to life and mine. Hopefully, she feels the same way and will never send me packing. If she does, I'll have to borrow a wheelbarrow.

ZOOM

Suburbia's crop circles

A "master planned community" in Maricopa County, Ariz. CHRISTOPH GIELEN/CIPHERS

Q&A

"We need to decipher them"

CHRISTOPH GIELEN
Artist/photographer, 46, based in New York

In his book Ciphers, photographer Christoph Gielen helps us grasp the impact our households have on the landscape with his aerial shots of suburbia's unusual shapes. Here's what he had to say about his work:

What inspired you to do this project? I wanted to do something that would be compelling and grab people's attention. Back in 2003, I was doing some aerial photography of controlled implosions in Scotland when I got the idea for the urban-sprawl project — to photograph different suburban developments across the U.S., from Nevada to Florida, from an airplane.

What did you see up there? The most unusual patterns imaginable. I could make out different floral shapes and designs that resembled a spider's web. But what I captured are places that are totally unsustainable.

So you're pointing to some social message? Yes, I want to trigger a discussion. We are all worried about the environment and climate change, and I wanted to place this concept of car-centric urban sprawl at the heart of the debate.

They look like concrete crop circles to me. It's very ironic that many of these patterns are floral or organic-looking, but there is very little sustainable or environmental about these developments. METRO

METRO AUGMENTED REALITY

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MetroTube

Hamster gets served tiny labour of love

ANDREW FIFIELD
metronews.ca

Burritos tend not to be the most delicate of foods, what with the overflowing contents breaking through the wrap to leave an incriminating trail down your hands.

Since most of us don't have the skilled hands of a surgeon, that's the role burritos are destined to play in our lives. This guy, however — this guy is capable of truly trim and tidy burritos. Why do that, you ask? To feed them to hamsters, of course!
(Via Hello Denizen on YouTube)

SCREENGRAB

metro

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SCENE 2

It's all about the Cash for roots rock band Skydiggers

Slow Burnin' Fire Tour.
Toronto group welcomes back co-founder for his first cross-Canada tour with them in 18 years

BACKSTAGE PASS
Jared Story
winnipeg@metronews.ca

Toronto roots rock band Skydiggers brings its Slow Burnin' Fire Tour to Winnipeg this Friday and Saturday. COURTESY HEATHER POLLOCK

Skydiggers fans are getting their Cash back.

Toronto roots rock band Skydiggers will be joined by co-founder Peter Cash on its Slow Burnin' Fire Tour, the guitarist/vocalist's first cross-Canada trek with the group in 18 years.

In October, Cash joined Skydiggers onstage for its 25th anniversary show at Toronto's Winter Garden Theatre, and then again during the band's annual Christmas concert at the Horseshoe Tavern. After those shows, Cash was inspired to hit the road again with his old bandmates.

"We've always said to Pete, 'Whenever you want to come and do shows, just let us know,'" says Skydiggers guitarist Josh Finlayson.

"There's always a microphone there and it certainly adds a great dimension. There's just such a great chemistry between us and it's pretty effortless. I think it will be great for the audience, too. It means we can just cull from a lot of material. The problem isn't what we play, it's what we don't play, which is a great problem to have."

Finlayson, who is joined in Skydiggers by fellow founding members Andy Maize and Ron Macey, alongside Michael Johnston, Noel Webb and Jessy Bell Smith, says the band took the name of its current tour from Slow Burning Fire, a song from its 1992 album Restless.

"It's a song that Pete learned from a George Jones duets record," Finlayson says. "We learned the song early on. It's interesting, when you're a young band, you're starting out, your sound is developing and evolving and I think it was a tune that really helped galvanize the way we sang and played together and the sound we made. It's funny because we didn't write it, but we definitely made it our own."

Speaking of a new spin on an old song, for She Comes Into The Room, one of four albums Skydiggers released last year in celebration its 25th anniversary, the band had its favourite female vocalists sing on its songs, women like Oh Susanna and Margo Timmins of Cowboy Junkies.

"It was very humbling and very flattering. As a songwriter that's one of the greatest honours you can have, someone making that kind of commitment to a tune you wrote," Finlayson says.

SKYDIGGERS PLAY THE WEST END CULTURAL CENTRE ON FRIDAY (SEATED SHOW) AND SATURDAY (DANCE PARTY). TICKETS ARE $29.50 AT THE WECC, MUSIC TRADER, WINNIPEG FILM GROUP, WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL MUSIC STORE AND TICKETMASTER, OR $35 AT THE DOOR. SHOWTIME IS 8 P.M. BOTH NIGHTS.

See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app. See the video for James Blunt's Postcards

James Blunt gets a little more personal with Moon Landing

New recording. 'This album is the album I would have written and recorded if the other albums hadn't sold the way they did'

PAT HEALY
Metro World News in Boston

James Blunt has come to terms with the success that made him a household name almost a decade ago. And with his new album, Moon Landing, he says he was finally able to produce a collection of songs that are almost a logical extension of his 2004 debut, Back to Bedlam.

"This album is the album I would have written and recorded if the other albums hadn't sold the way they did," he says. "These are songs that are personal — I suppose a great example is you might take Goodbye My Lover on the first album, it's opening yourself up — and then to have it be a commercial success, you also get a lot of criticism."

When the topic of criticism comes up, James Blunt reveals his acid tongue in a hilariously fast rant.

"I'm not singing manly songs about how big and strong I am, so people say that it's a little bit wet and delicate, words that you don't want to be described as, like romantic," he says.

"So maybe I didn't want to open up that way and accept that type of criticism. But I realized, you know what? Some terrific guy that is up onstage singing about how big and strong (he) is, he was led to that stage by six big and strong security type guys, and I'm not.

"I walk through (the) audience. I don't sing songs about how big and strong I am; I was in the army for six years, and I know how perfectly strong I am. I was in the war and I know how hard and rough it is to get in a serious fight.

Quoted

"I don't sing about my successes and how rich I might be — I sing about my failures, my hopes."
James Blunt, singer

You think James Blunt's not tough? Just check out that shirt. GETTY IMAGES

"So instead of singing about that, I sing about my weakness. I don't sing about my successes and how rich I might be — I sing about my failures, my hopes, my fears; these things are much more braver to sing about.

"Any critique you have is probably from one guy in his bedroom with his trousers around his ankles in the shadows, feeling brave as a result. You put the spotlight on him and he'll probably shit himself."

It's taken a while for Blunt to come to this level of disenchanted acceptance of his critics and audience.

"My first record I cut to try and get a record deal, and I did," he says. "I made the album as an innocent and naïve recording, then being on that indie label as I was, it became mainstream with one song that the whole world knows.

"And because of that I wrote a reactionary album called All the Lost Souls. It wasn't written to embrace the new audience I had. It was dark, and I was kind of unhappy being thrown into the public eye like that and that's why it's called All the Lost Souls. It's not a happy title.

"And then the third album I did embrace it more, there's fun to be had as a pop star, and so I wrote songs for my arenas and it made a third world tour great fun. But with all the fun that the tour was and how special it made that tour, it wasn't nearly as fulfilling as when you are writing something much more personal."

One particular song on the new album which feels especially personal is Miss America, a tribute to the late Whitney Houston.

"What was interesting and tragic about her was that the insight into her life overtook her talent and then it just became about her tragedy and her story, but it was also about how we spectated that and her story is not unusual," says Blunt.

"Amy Winehouse was something similar, even Princess Diana, where we spectate to such a degree that we almost become players in their downfall, because every time we buy magazine to read about their worst moments, or go online to see picture of them, another paparazzi is sent out and with every new lens that is pointed in their faces I think their world becomes that much smaller and their problems much more intense and I think it contributes to their downfall."

Reunited

For Moon Landing, Blunt enlisted producer Tom Rothrock, who helmed Back to Bedlam, the album that spawned Goodbye My Lover and the "one song that the whole world knows," You're Beautiful.

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Donnie Wahlberg ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

New Kids on the Boat: Nineties group hits the high seas for reality show

Whoever thought up this reality show should get the Nobel Prize. It combines everyone's two favourite things: '90s nostalgia and the high seas. New Kids on the Block, the original '90s boy band, are reuniting for a reality show on a boat. Cable network TVGN is developing Rock This Boat, a show about the reunited NKOTB setting sail with die-hard fans for a week of partying. Sounds like a thin premise for a show, but I assume they will also be fighting pirates, exploring uncharted waters and searching for buried treasure. That's what people on boats do, right? Rock This Boat will air next season. It will be executive produced by Donnie Wahlberg, NKOTB member and brother of Mark Wahlberg. The latter is probably jealous that his career is thriving sufficiently that he does not get to go on a boat to revive it.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Wanna marry Prince Harry? The royal is single again

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Did you know there's a reality show called I Wanna Marry "Harry"? It's a Joe Millionaire-type deal, where a bunch of women compete for the affections of a random ginger Englishman they've been told is Prince Harry. It's incredibly mean, but those contestants may have the last laugh: Harry is, in fact, single again, and available for marrying. I hope one of them snags him.

Prince Harry, the fun-loving royal currently fourth in line for the English throne, has reportedly split from his girlfriend Cressida Bonas, according to the Daily Mirror. The move comes as a surprise: Earlier this year, the two were said to be getting serious and many royal-watchers expected them to get engaged.

Twitter

@mindykaling
my head is too heavy it flattens even the firmest of pillows

@ricky_martin
You have to believe that in the end, all the dots are going to connect.

@SarahKSilverman
Mississippi is such a great place to live if you don't have a vagina

Renée Zellweger

Did Demi give Renée her plastic surgeon's digits?

Renée Zellweger is reportedly worrying herself senseless about mounting a career comeback — and has turned to Demi Moore for help as a life coach, according to Star magazine. "Unless she pulls herself together, Renee's acting future looks very uncertain. Renee is in therapy dealing with her anxiety about appearing on camera again after a string of embarrassing movie flops," a source says. And reactions to the Bridget Jones Diary star's recent rare public appearance certainly aren't helping matters. "The mixed reaction to her transformation has unnerved Renée in a big way," the source says. "Pals are convinced it was Demi who gave her her plastic surgeon's number, thinking it would give her a confidence boost." That plan, it seems, has backfired.

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Tech is on trend

If X-Men made sportswear, this is probably what it would look like. The next generation of athletic style is teched out and high on hybrids.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Who knew that X-Men: Days of the Future Past could teach us a little bit about what's fashionable in the present. CONTRIBUTED

Zara

Sweatshirt with faux-leather appliqué, $59, zara.com

Saint Laurent

Metallic bomber jacket, $1,224, farfetch.com

Raf Simons x Adidas

Sneakers, $440, mrporter.com

ASOS

BLACK Printed panel T-shirt, $38, asos.com

COS

Technical jersey trousers, $76, cosstores.com

Gadgets meet garments online

High-tech, high style. Amazon opens up shop to consumers who want wearables that work for them

Just as it did for the smart home, the online retailer has launched a storefront dedicated to wearable technology devices.

Focused as much on educating consumers as on selling products to them, The Amazon Wearable Technology portal has gone live as part of its U.S. site.

It organizes devices across five categories: fitness and wellness; healthcare devices; wearable cameras; smart watches; and family, kids and pets; but it also features buying guides, a video library of tutorials, featured or spotlight products and an editor's corner blog.

In September, Amazon launched a dedicated web portal for home automation and smart home products along the same lines, aiming to demystify the technology and help consumers to make informed decisions about the products that best suit their needs and their lifestyles.

There's little doubt that the buzz around wearable tech devices is building and building, but so far that buzz doesn't appear to have translated into huge consumer demand.

With the exception of fitness trackers, the latest crop of smart watches has failed to generate much in the way of sales. Juniper Research estimates that 15 million wearable health and fitness devices were sold in 2013 and believes that by 2018, that number could be as high as 100 million. AFP

Will you be ordering up your share of smart style? CONTRIBUTED

How to live large in a small space

Design advice. These timeless tips can make any small space look roomy and spacious

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

New homes are getting smaller and smaller, so adhering to a few good design rules can help you live just a little bit larger.

I can't imagine better advice to dispense to anyone who's moving, renovating or sprucing up their place than these golden rules of small-space decorating. They're timeless and hold true for any space you might live in. Here are my top four rules:

Tones and colour

• Keep tones of flooring, walls and furnishings similar so the eye roams without interruption between light and dark shades.

• Cooler versions of a colour (every colour has a warm and cool side) tend to reflect more light, therefore making a small space feel larger.

• When the width of the ceiling is smaller than the height of the wall (as in most small condo lofts), then paint the ceiling the same colour as walls; it will make the room appear wider.

Use of mirrors

• You may have heard that mirrors can visually expand a space. The secret is to use them to widen, not lengthen, a room, so always hang a mirror on the long wall, not the short one.

• To bring light into a long, narrow space, stand a floor mirror 90 degrees to a window; it will reflect the window and direct the incoming light deep into the space.

• Never be afraid to stand a side table, chair or plant in front of a large mirror to add drama and depth, especially in foyers and bedrooms.

Scale of furnishings

• There is an art to creating the illusion of large-scale furnishings in a small space. Try incorporating large-scale items that don't take up much floor space — art, console tables, footstools, area rugs and curtains are all perfect contenders since they don't fill a room with their volume.

• The 2/3 proportion is your best friend when layering items in a room. The coffee table should be 2/3 the width of the sofa, the sofa should be 2/3 the width of the rug, and the art should be 2/3 the width of the sofa.

The need for storage

• Storage is a practical need when decorating a small space. Try to incorporate it into every element of your space. Add an extra shelf one foot above floor level in a closet — this will offer up another row of shoe storage. And another shelf at the very top of your closet is great for storing out-of-season clothing.

• Look for furniture that incorporates storage, folds down or offers double-duty to offer flexible alternatives in a smaller space.

Creating a monochromatic colour scheme allows the eye to travel without interruption. A floor mirror helps reflect another window into the room. Oversized Leaning Floor Mirror, $1,100, potterybarn.com

One makes a footrest, two make a bench in the foyer or at the end of a bed. A classic style icon that fits a modern or traditional interior. Hudson's Bay Company Point Blanket Ottoman, $395, thebay.com

Wall-hung shelving and containers help to keep vanity areas organized. Although made for herb gardens, this plant container system is perfect for brushes and other beauty accessories. SOCKER plant pot with holder, $29.99, ikea.ca

Baffling bushy-tailed backyard bandits

They're vermin to some, cunning adversaries to others.

Squirrels have long been a source of fascination and frustration for gardeners and bird enthusiasts engaged in a near-constant battle to keep them away from the nuts and seeds put out for birds.

Greased poles. Loud music. Motion-activated sprinklers. Bill Adler Jr. has heard it all, and tried many.

The 57-year-old humour writer has been collecting tips to keep squirrels from avian meals for three decades, and recently updated his 1988 book, Outwitting Squirrels: 101 Cunning Stratagems to Reduce Dramatically the Egregious Misappropriation of Seed From Your Birdfeeder by Squirrels (Chicago Review Press), for a third edition.

The most important thing to know? While technology has changed, squirrels still have little else to do all day but strategize. And they're good at it.

"There's no one technique that works for everyone," Adler says. Try a few tactics, and be willing to change. Most of all, he says, don't sweat it.

Here are some tips (some serious, some not) from Adler and others to bring a little harmony to your backyard:

A squirrel attempting to eat bird seed on an Eliminator. The squirrel-proof bird feeder protects your bird seed from persistent squirrels via technology that closes the seed ports based on the weight of the intruder standing on the perch ring. WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The natural

Resigned to the fact that squirrels are going to call his Washington, D.C., yard home, Adler puts out some unsalted mixed nuts along his steps.

"If you feed them, they will tend to leave the bird feeder alone," he says.

Squirrels also love corn, so if you don't want them invading your feeder, keep your birdseed corn-free.

You can try filling your feeder with safflower seeds, which are high in fat and protein.

The technical

These days, there are motion-activated outdoor cameras if you want to monitor your feeder, and even motion-activated sprinklers to douse offending squirrels.

"Squirrel-proof" bird feeders abound. The best, according to Adler and other experts, are those that sit on a five-foot pole and are covered with a plastic dome or "baffle" that's hard for squirrels to cling to.

If you want to get even more high-tech, there are weight-activated feeders that actually cover up the feeding ports when a squirrel latches on.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nuts to you

Cray cray ways to drive 'em away

Adler devotes a chapter of his book to his own misadventures with squirrels, dating back to his bachelor days, when he first moved to Washington from New York. Wanting a pet in an apartment building that didn't allow them, Adler invested in a bird feeder.

"The next day I got a squirrel, which was not part of the instructions," he says.

He tried yelling, coated the bricks of his building with Teflon, squirted the squirrel with water, and even rolled out some stainless steel spikes. But nothing worked.

After hearing similar stories from other frustrated bird lovers, Adler decided to pen the first edition of his diatribe against the rodents. Also included in the book are feeder ratings, ways to attract certain birds and 101 "cunning stratagems" to keep squirrels at bay. Some are practical. Most are hilariously ludicrous.

Some of the more entertaining strategies:

• Dig a moat around your feeder. Fill it with piranha.

• Trap squirrels and send them to Antarctica.

• Encourage your neighbours — and what the heck, your local government — to use drones to monitor and, ahem, deal with squirrels.

• Buy a squirrel costume. Parade around your yard wearing it. Squirrels can't figure out what in the world is going on and it drives them away.

• Buy some lasers and set up a hologram show. Make holograms of cats and hunters. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app.
Canadian superfoods! Julie Daniluk has you covered from coast-to-coast

This recipe serves six. JULIE DANILUK

Barney and Purple People Eater would surely approve

Hempy Purple Coleslaw. Not only does this dish have the same awesome hue as some memorable characters, it's also delicious and nutritious

"The zip in this recipe is from the tangy sour flavour of the sauerkraut," writes Julie Daniluk in Slimming Meals that Heal. "Look for unpasteurized sauerkraut in your local health food store, as the natural process of fermentation creates beneficial probiotic bacteria.

"I love Ambrosia apples because they are slow to brown when cut and are ideal for salads. Nutty hemp hearts offer the healing benefits of magnesium and omega-3 fatty acids."

1. Drain sauerkraut and reserve liquid. Mix together salad ingredients.

2. In a separate bowl, whisk dressing ingredients together.

3. Add dressing to salad and combine until salad is evenly coated.

RECIPES EXCERPTED FROM SLIMMING MEALS THAT HEAL BY JULIE DANILUK. IMAGES AND RECIPES © 2014 JULIE DANILUK. EXCERPTED BY PERMISSION OF RANDOM HOUSE CANADA, A DIVISION OF RANDOM HOUSE OF CANADA LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Ingredients

Salad
- 1 cup unpasteurized sauerkraut, drained
- 4 cups finely shredded purple cabbage
- 1/2 cup finely sliced red onion
- 2 organic apples, unpeeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp hemp hearts

Dressing
- 2 tbsp hemp oil
- 2 tbsp sauerkraut liquid
- 1 tsp dried dill weed
- Raw honey, to taste
- 2 tsp pink rock salt or grey sea salt

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1. Heat 1 tablespoon of coconut oil in a large pot over medium-high heat until shimmering but not smoking.

2. Add steak and cook until browned on both sides, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes. Cut lengthwise into 2 long pieces, then crosswise, across grain, into 1/4-inch-thick slices.

3. Heat remaining 1 tbsp of oil in pan over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onion, basil, oregano, thyme and salt. Cook, stirring often, until vegetables are very tender, 8 to 10 minutes.

4. Sprinkle flour over vegetables; stir to coat. Stir in beef broth and vinegar and bring to a boil, stirring often. Reduce heat to simmer and continue cooking, stirring often, until mixture is thickened, about 3 minutes.

5. Stir in coconut milk, sliced steak and any accumulated juices. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring, until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes more. Top with fresh parsley or chives and serve on kelp noodles or kasha crepes.

Ingredients
- 2 tbsp coconut oil, divided
- 1 lb flank steak, trimmed
- 4 cups halved and thinly sliced shiitake mushroom caps
- 2 cups sliced onion
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp pink rock salt or grey sea salt
- 2 tbsp arrowroot flour
- 1 1/2 cups beef or chicken broth
- 1 1/2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup coconut milk

Garnish
- 2 cups chopped fresh chives or fresh parsley

This recipe makes six servings and can be served with kasha crepes or kelp noodles. JULIE DANILUK

Cookbook of the Week

Eat well and get healthy, too

Slimming Meals that Heal by Julie Daniluk focuses on the relationship between inflammation, allergies and weight gain.

The release offers 125 recipes that don't require you to count calories. It also includes information on cleansing the organs, the specific power of superfoods and techniques that directly reduce cravings. Daniluk has also developed a five-step plan to boost metabolism and balance hormones that lead to holistic weight balance.

Among the recipes included are: Scallops with Harvest Vegetables, Skinny Onion Rings, Low-Cal Turkey Chili and more. METRO

For your phone

Cook's Illustrated All-Time Best Recipes (iPad; $9.99)

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
life@metronews.ca

Representing 20 years of kitchen-tested dishes that use supermarket ingredients, this collection of 52 illustrated and video-enhanced recipes offers the final word on pork chops, oven fries and more.

Talk to your dentist — ahchoo! — about allergies

SHUTTERSTOCK

Getting your teeth cleaned by a dentist isn't usually cause for alarm. But for people with allergies or sensitivities, visiting the dentist can mean exposure, often unwittingly, to problem substances.

Speak up. Let your dentist know if you've ever had any sensitivity or negative reaction while undergoing dental care. Interact with him/her during your treatment. Ask questions. Voice your concerns. Don't be shy. Follow these suggestions on your next visit to the dentist:

Know your options. Be your own advocate. Understand your health issues and that there are allergy-friendly alternatives to troublesome substances. Inform your dentist in a courteous manner and work together to ensure that you receive the safest dental care.

Update your records. Make certain your dentist is aware of your latest health history, including any recent surgeries and medication changes.

Flag your chart. Your allergy or sensitivity should be clearly marked in your record and the file should be flagged.

At Shine Dental, your health and wellness is our main focus. We employ a detailed risk factors form to give you the best assessment possible to protect you from any and all dangers to your body.

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Susie at Ecotrend Ecologics says those with nut allergies or those that are allergic to other forms of protein will benefit from their wide selection of natural health products, such as their omega hemp seed foods.

Omega hemp seeds don't have any known allergens.

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MLB

Royals hold on to conquer Jays

Alcides Escobar delivered a two-run double in the seventh inning, and the Kansas City Royals held on for a tense 4-2 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Wednesday night.

Eric Hosmer drove in the other two runs for the Royals, whose bullpen blew a 2-0 lead for young starter Yordano Ventura before holding on to beat Toronto with a late rally for the second straight night. Kansas City won the series opener 10-7 behind a six-run eighth inning.

Drew Hutchison (1-2) allowed all four runs on five hits in seven innings for Toronto.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clippers for sale

Oprah interested in buying team

If Donald Sterling is compelled to sell the Los Angeles Clippers, the list of potential buyers will have more stars than the team's roster. Oprah Winfrey leads the list of wealthy luminaries who announced their interest in purchasing the club shortly after NBA commissioner Adam Silver banned Sterling from the league for life. Others that have shown interest include music mogul Sean Combs and Floyd Mayweather Jr., who wants to form a group to buy the team.

Oprah Winfrey
GETTY IMAGES FILE

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Raptors guard Kyle Lowry celebrates a three-point buzzer-beater with Greivis Vasquez to end the second quarter on Wednesday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto ready to Rap it up in Brooklyn

NBA playoffs. Raptors hang on for the win despite being outscored by 20 in the fourth

Kyle Lowry poured in 36 points to lift Toronto to a nail-biting 115-113 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday, giving the Raptors a 3-2 lead in their best-of-seven playoff series.

Game 5

Raptors	Nets
115	113

DeMar DeRozan added 23 points, while Jonas Valanciunas finished with 16, and Greivis Vasquez added 15.

Amir Johnson chipped in with 11 points for the Raptors, who gave up a 26-point lead in the fourth quarter, making for some tense moments at the Air Canada Centre, but held on for the victory.

Joe Johnson led the Nets with 30 points, while Mirza Teletovic added 17, and Deron Williams and Alan Anderson finished with 13 apiece.

The series heads back to Brooklyn's Barclays Center for Game 6 on Friday.

The Raptors controlled the game through second and third quarters where it seemed they could do no wrong, and led by 26 points twice late in the third.

They headed into the fourth up 91-69 and appeared poised to cruise to an easy victory, but the Nets had plenty of fight left in them, tying the game at 101-101 on a three-pointer by Johnson with 3:16 to go and stunning the crowd.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New pop Parker pushes Spurs past Mavs

Tim Duncan posts up against Shane Larkin of the Mavericks in Game 5 on Wednesday in San Antonio, Texas. CHRIS COVATTA/GETTY IMAGES

Tony Parker had 23 points hours after the birth of his first child and the San Antonio Spurs never trailed in a 109-103 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on Wednesday night, taking a 3-2 lead in their first-round series.

Manu Ginobili had 19 points and Tiago Splitter added 17 points and 12 rebounds as San Antonio regained home-court advantage in the tense series against their intrastate rival. Tim Duncan added 16 points and 12 rebounds and Kawhi Leonard had 15 points for the Spurs.

Game 5

Spurs	Mavericks
109	103

Vince Carter scored 28 points, making numerous heavily contested shots in going 10 for 16 from the field for Dallas.

After averaging 16 points in the series' first four games, Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki found the stroke in scoring 26 points. Nowitzki was 10-for-20 shooting, but it wasn't enough to overcome Parker and the Spurs returning to form.

Carter's 3-pointer with 3 minutes left pulled Dallas within 98-94 but Parker followed a minute later with his only 3-pointer of the game, punctuating the shot with a loud scream.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

Who are the most underrated athletes in team sports? Scan this image with your Metro News app to see some of our picks.

Bruins forward Patrice Bergeron has established himself as one of the NHL's premier players. GETTY IMAGES FILE

No longer league's best-kept secret

Just one of the best.
Beyond Boston's playoff runs, Olympics showed why Bruins forward is elite

Patrice Bergeron started earning acclaim for his defensive game four seasons ago when he was a legitimate Selke Trophy candidate for the first time.

It has taken longer for Bergeron to be appreciated as one of the best all-around players in the NHL. Maybe it started during the Boston Bruins' 2011 Stanley Cup run or last year's trip to the final, but after playing a major role in Team Canada's gold-medal performance at the Sochi Olympics, the 28-year-old is surely considered among hockey's elite centres.

"I think what he's done is he opened a lot of people's eyes," Boston coach Claude Julien said. "I know at his first Olympics he didn't have ... to do what he did. The last one I think people realized how good he is."

Statistically, Bergeron had just two assists in six games, but the Quebec City native shifted from a fourth-line centre role to right-wing alongside Sidney Crosby and never missed a beat. His nearly flawless play wasn't a revelation as much as it underscored his growth from the 2010 Games in Vancouver, where he was the 13th forward.

In that tournament, as defenceman Chris Pronger told CBC Sports recently, Bergeron had a smaller role that was "probably a little unfair to him."

"Patrice would sit on the bench for long periods of time and then we'd get a penalty and turn to him and say, 'OK, go out and kill it,'" Pronger said. "That's a pretty tough, but important, job."

It's also an important job to play with Crosby, whose unique talent level and mental acuity are often difficult to match. Bergeron said during the Olympics that the challenge is to be at his best when on Crosby's wing.

"It's about trying to find him when he's open but also it's getting open for yourself, not just trying to feed him," Bergeron said of Crosby. "You give him the puck in your zone and he does his thing."

Sochi gave Bergeron an international showcase to show his stuff, but he has been a key cog for the Bruins for a number of years. He has played 70-plus games in eight of nine full NHL seasons since entering the league in 2003 and had 20 points in 23 games when Boston won the cup in 2011.

This season, though, he was downright dominant at times. With 62 points in 80 games, a league-best plus-38 rating and a 58.6 per cent success rate in the faceoff circle, Bergeron was the Bruins' most important forward as they won the Presidents' Trophy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Like fine wine

"I didn't think a guy that's already played eight or nine years can get better each and every year, but he is."

Brad Marchand on his Bruins teammate Patrice Bergeron

Rivals meet again

The Canadiens and Bruins will face each other in the post-season for a record 34th time when their NHL Eastern Conference semi-final opens Thursday night in Boston, and this one promises to be as nasty and closely contested as ever.

- As is the tradition, it pits the bigger, more physical Bruins against the Habs, who are built on quickness and puck pressure.

Flyers fall. Lundqvist, Carcillo take Rangers to 2nd round vs. Penguins

Daniel Carcillo and Benoit Pouliot scored second-period goals, and the New York Rangers advanced to the second round of the Stanley Cup playoffs with a 2-1 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers in Game 7 on Wednesday night.

The Rangers shook off a 5-2 thrashing in Philadelphia on Tuesday and knocked out the Flyers about 24 hours later, improving to 6-0 in Game 7 at Madison Square Garden. New York will face another Metropolitan Division rival, the Pittsburgh Penguins, in the next round starting on Friday.

Henrik Lundqvist made 26 saves, allowing only a third-period goal to Jason Akeson 3:32 into the final frame. He protected the one-goal lead at 7:25 when he made an awkward save against Flyers captain Claude Giroux.

No team won consecutive games in the series. The Rangers, who finished two points ahead of Philadelphia during the regular season, made the most of their home-ice advantage by taking three of the four games in the Garden.

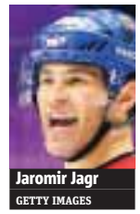
Carcillo, re-inserted into the Game 7 lineup, scored the all-important first goal 3:06 into the second off a picture-perfect pass from Mats Zuccarello. It was the second goal of the series for Carcillo, who played for just the third time in the series and the first at home. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Philly's Zac Rinaldo checks New York's Brad Richards during first-period action. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One happy Devil. Jagr staying put in New Jersey

Devils leading-scorer Jaromir Jagr will remain in New Jersey.

"I was happy being here," the 42-year-old Jagr said Thursday in a conference call from Belarus, where he is playing for the Czech Republic in the world championships.



Jaromir Jagr GETTY IMAGES

"What would happen? Someone might give me more money, but nobody can guarantee me that I'd be happy someplace else."

The Devils did not release terms of the contract. Jagr said it was a one-year deal. The contract is believed to be worth $6 million with incentives.

Jagr led the Devils last season with 24 goals and 43 assists. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill Masterton memorial

Jaromir Jagr, Carolina Hurricanes' Manny Malhotra and New York Rangers' Dominic Moore are the finalists for the Masterton Trophy.

- The honour goes "to the player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey."

WHL

Reinhart named player of the year

Kootenay Ice captain Sam Reinhart is the Western Hockey League's player of the year.

The 18-year-old centre from Vancouver led the Ice in scoring with 36 goals and 69 assists in 60 games.

Reinhart also had six goals and 17 assists in 13 playoff games for the Ice, who were eliminated in the second round.

Reinhart is also a top-ranked prospect for the NHL entry draft in June.

He is the son of former NHL defenceman Paul Reinhart.

His brother Griffin plays for the WHL's Edmonton Oil Kings and another brother Max is a Calgary Flames prospect.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
You have taken on a lot of new tasks in recent weeks and could probably do with some help. Others will come to your assistance and share the load if you ask them but you must make it worth their while.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Make sure you know what is expected of you before backing a plan that will take up a lot of your time and energy. And make sure there's a timetable.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
If others want to make an issue of things that are of no significance to you then you have no choice but to turn your back and walk away.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
There is a danger that you will try to make the facts fit your assumptions — and if you do the consequences could be dire. Always strive to see life as it is, not as you wish it might be. Then and only then can you make a difference.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If your ultimate goal is as far away as ever, perhaps you should take it as a sign that something is wrong. It's not too late to change course — only your ego is holding you back.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The planets are very much in your favour at the moment and no doubt you fear nothing, but you still need to be careful. Don't push your luck and don't push yourself beyond your natural limits, no matter what the potential rewards might be.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Mars in your sign endows you with courage but other aspects warn you can't do it all on your own. You need to rediscover the joy of how good it feels to share success with others.

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You have never been one for small talk and what others are wittering on about no doubt bores you to tears. Ignore them and focus your attention on what is important to you, even if no one else seems to agree.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Try to say only nice things about friends and colleagues, because if you make your true feelings known it will cause you all sorts of problems. That really applies on the work front.

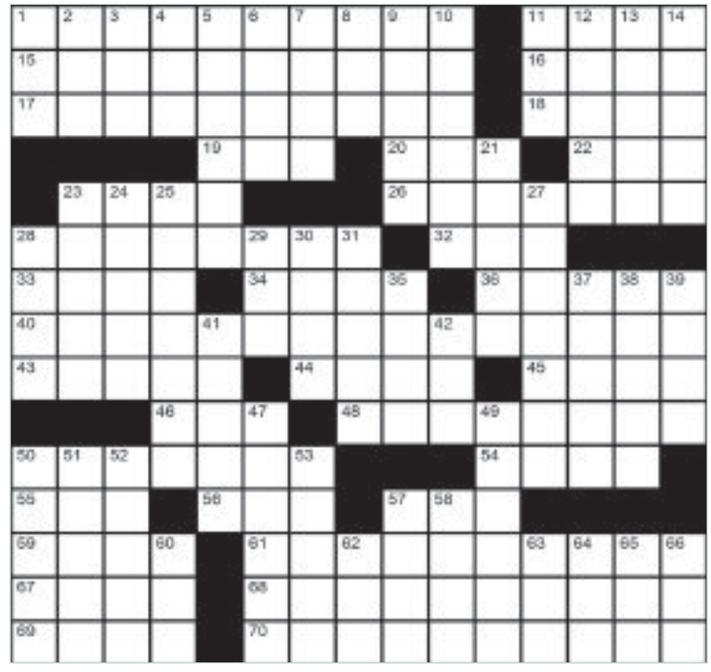
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
For some reason you seem reluctant to take advantage of an opportunity most people would give their right arm for. Yes, it could go wrong but it could also go stunningly right. Unless you try, you won't know.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You think that your feelings for a certain person are a one-way street but that is far from the truth. They care as much for you as you do for them but, for now at least, they've got other things to worry about.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You will discover something about a friend or loved one that surprises you today. Resist the urge to pry any deeper — leave them a few secrets to enjoy. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

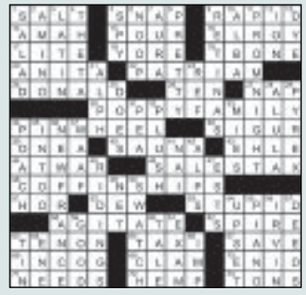
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Blue Rodeo song that starts "They met in a hurricane...": number + 3 wds.
11. Pod vegetable
15. __-__ suit
16. Fear: French
17. Intolerance inciter
18. William H. __ (27th US President)
19. 'Stock' suffix
20. Aussie hopper
22. Rapa __ (Easter Island)
23. Aurora
26. Overcast
28. PM = Prime __
32. __ _ degree
33. Worldwide [abbr.]
34. Fertilizer ingredient
36. Single
40. Tummy tuck, for example: 2 wds.
43. Heretofore: 2 wds.
44. Line giver
45. W Network's "Come __ with Me Canada"
46. Cleaning item
48. Bespoke
50. Where to put carrots and potatoes as common ingredients: 3 wds.
54. Conjunctions
55. Bo Derek's number
56. "Hush."
57. Wk. word
59. __-__-date
61. Winnipeg: James Armstrong __ International Airport
67. Reshmi __, CBC journalist
68. Cheeky
69. Plus
70. Expands Earthy-ly

Down
1. "Up, Up and Away" by The __ Dimension
2. Omega-3 fatty acid, e.g.
3. __ gallery
4. "__-haw!"
5. Saskatchewan agricultural village an hour north of Regina
6. Apple music player
7. Eleven - Two's answer
8. Ms. Tilly
9. Great tennis servers
10. Ump's call, "__, __!"
11. Decide
12. "Higher than the Sun" British band
13. Mr. Wainwright
14. MGM's motto, Ars Gratia __
21. "Tin soldiers and Nixon coming / We're finally __ __ own." - Neil Young, "Ohio"
23. Ancient animals [abbr.]
24. Nervous
25. Mr. Valderrama's
27. Robert __, Harvard University symbologist in "The Da Vinci Code" (2006)
28. Isinglass
29. "King __": Steve Martin's vintage SNL tune
30. __ Blair (Pen name, George Orwell, b.1903 - d.1950)
31. Like an edited-some-more movie
35. Cruising
37. Bizarre
38. Coastal flappers, variantly
39. Faux-hued
41. Les __-Unis (USA)
42. William Tell's canton
47. Baseball legend, Lou __ (b.1903 - d.1941)
49. Hardy's comedy pal
50. Saskatchewan town northeast of Regina
51. Kathmandu is its capital
52. Motion foes
53. Spin
57. "Love Shack" by __ _-52's
58. Hebrew folk song: "__ Nagila"
60. Gold: Spanish
62. __-Magnon Man
63. Antiperspirant, Soft & __
64. Casually utters
65. ...three, two, __...
66. Nocturnal periods, briefly

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

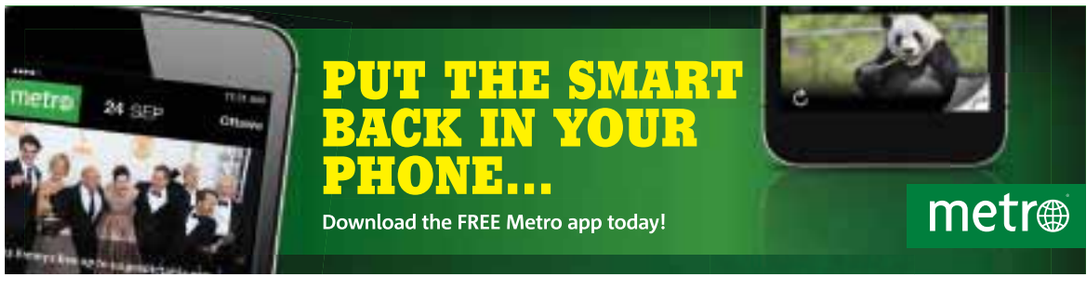
6	4	1	9	3	7	5	8	2
3	5	9	8	2	1	6	7	4
7	2	8	4	5	6	1	9	3
1	7	3	5	6	4	9	2	8
2	6	4	1	8	9	3	5	7
8	9	5	3	7	2	4	1	6
4	3	7	2	9	5	8	6	1
5	8	6	7	1	3	2	4	9
9	1	2	6	4	8	7	3	5

Weather

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MAX: 10° MIN: 1°	MAX: 10° MIN: -1°	MAX: 8° MIN: 1°

BT BREAKFAST TELEVISION

JENNA KHAN
WEATHER SPECIALIST
"Weather impacts everything we do. Providing the information you need before you head out that door and take on the day is the best part of my morning." **WEEKDAYS 6 AM**



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